

REMARKS

Claims 1-21 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1, 3 and 9 are amended. Support for amended claims 1 and 9 can be found in the specification, for example, in paragraph 123. Claim 3 is amended to be consistent with amended claim 1. Accordingly, no new matter is added. Support for new claims 20 and 21 can be found in the specification, for example, at least in paragraphs [0123] and [0125] - [0127]. In view of at least the following remarks, reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested.

The Office Action, on page 7, indicates that claims 3-8 and 10-18 recite allowable subject matter. Specifically, the Office Action indicates that these claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the features of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicants appreciate this indication of allowability but respectfully submit that at least independent claims 1 and 9, from which these claims directly or indirectly depend, are allowable for at least the reasons set forth below.

The Office Action, on page 2, rejects claims 1, 2 and 19 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over U.S. Patent No. 6,089,562 to Jang et al. (hereinafter "Jang"). The Office Action, on page 4, rejects claim 9 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Jang in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,905,046 to Tsunoi et al. (hereinafter "Tsunoi"). These rejections are respectfully traversed.

Jang cannot reasonably be considered to teach "a stopper located at a lower position when the paper is fed from the manual feed tray, the stopper arranged to move vertically with respect to the abutting surface to contact the leading edge of the paper and lift up the leading edge of the paper when positioned higher than the abutting surface," as recited in independent claims 1 and 9.

The Office Action asserts that the projection 11a of Jang, which allegedly corresponds to the claimed stopper, is located at a lower position when the paper is fed from the feeder 60 and the boss 62, and allegedly arranged to move vertically with respect to the inside surface

of the finger 71 to lift up the bottom end of the paper when positioned higher than the inside surface of the finger 71. Despite these allegations, the projection 11a of Jang does not contact the leading edge of the paper when the projection 11a is caused to move vertically.

Jang merely discloses a knock-up plate 11, on which recording paper is stacked, and a projection 11a formed at a side of the knock-up plate 11. See Jang, for example, col. 4, lines 19 and 20, and lines 32-36. Importantly, the projection 11a of Jang, which is formed at the side of the knock-up plate 11, only contacts a lower surface of the pressure bar 41 of Jang. No objective evidence of record indicates that the projection 11a of Jang is in contact with any other object, i.e., a leading edge of the recording paper of Jang.

Also, Tsunoi fails to remedy the above-noted deficiencies of Jang. Tsunoi is merely relied upon by the Office Action for its alleged teaching of a paper detection device.

Accordingly, for the reasons discussed above, Jang and Tsunoi, alone or in a permissible combination, cannot reasonably be considered to teach or to have suggested the combination of all the features positively recited in independent claims 1 and 9. Further, claims 2 and 19 are also not taught by Jang, for at least the respective dependence of these claims directly on an allowable independent claim 1, as well as for the separately patentable subject matter that each of these claims recites.

Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections of claims 1, 2, 9 and 19 are respectfully requested.

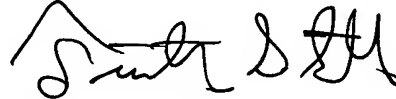
New claims 20 and 21 depend from claims 1 and 9, respectively. Applicants submit that these claims are also not taught by Jang, for at least the respective dependence of these claims directly on allowable independent claims 1 and 9, respectively. Furthermore, Jang does teach the separately patentable subject matter that each of claims 20 and 21 recite. That is, Jang does not teach "wherein the stopper drive device rotates to move the stopper vertically with respect to the abutting surface." In contrast, the projection 11a of Jang, which

allegedly corresponds to the claimed stopper, moves vertically along a single axis. See Jang, for example, Figs. 6-8.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1-21 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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Attachment:

Amendment Transmittal

Date: September 17, 2007

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